ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE

TRUSTEES

OF THE

MISSISSIPPI STATE INSTITUTION

FOR THE

EDUCATION OF THE BLIND,

For the year 1868-69.

SARAH B. MERRILL,
SUPERINTENDENT.

PHILADELPHIA:
G. T. STOCKDALE, PRINTER,
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REPORT.

To the Trustees of the Mississippi State Institution for the Education of the Blind.

GENTLEMEN: At the close of the usual session of 1868 and '69 I have the honor to submit to you a brief report of the conduct and management of the Institution during the year.

Owing to the absence of legislation and scarcity of funds the Institution has had no regular superintendent as provided by law, but has been under my control as superintendent and matron, aided by my daughters—

MISS MARY L. MERRILL, Literary Teacher.

MISS HELEN S. MERRILL, Music Teacher.

MISS JULIETTE MERRILL, Female Handicraft.

The Institution has been in as flourishing a condition as could be expected, considering the absence of that fostering legislation which has established and sustained it hitherto.

Eight new pupils have been received into the Institution during the past educational year.

The whole number of pupils has been twenty-one; as large a number as has received its benefits since its foundation. The health of the pupils has been remarkably good, and the progress in their various studies greater than in any previous year, and eminently gratifying.

I have the honor to submit herewith a catalogue of the pupils, places of residence, age, and causes of blindness, together with a daily routine and course of study during the past session.

Catalogue of Pupils.

NAMES.	AGE.	RESIDENCE.	CAUSE OF BLINDNESS.
Bettie Banks,	19,	Westville,	Sore eyes.
Antoinette Carr,	23,	Kosciusko,	Congenital.
*Jane Dalton,	16,	West Point,	Inflammation.
*Willie Ford,	8,	Wesson,	Neuralgia.
Florence Graves,	10,	Crystal Springs.	Sore eyes.
*Dora Hickman,	7,	Monticello,	Congenital.
Fannie Larkin,	19,	Brookhaven,	Sore eyes.
Ella Mitchell,	12,	Memphis,	Congenital.
John Moore,	29,	Kosciusko,	Inflammation.
*Henry McFall,	15,	Bolivar,	"
Ieter Neal,	20,	Port Gibson,	Measles.
Jack Stamps,	16,	Fayette,	Inflammation.
Dempsey Sherrod,	42,	Macon,	Scarlet fever.
*Ieptha White,	15,	Wesson,	Congenital.
*Frank White,	20,	"	"
*Hassie White,	17,	"	"
M. B. Whittington,	30,	Water Valley,	"
*Alice Whittington,	12,	"	"
Helen Wilbourn,	28,	Florence Station,	Inflammation.
Anna Walker,	16,	Beauregard,	Congenital.
Thomas Wyatt,	23,	Paulding,	Accidental.

* New scholars.

Daily Routine.

Such officers as have early duties to perform rise at 5 o'clock A. M. The pupils rise at six.

From six to eight breakfast and recreation. The blind girls make their own beds and keep their rooms in order.

At 9 o'clock morning worship. School exercise from 1 till 2. Five minutes between all the classes.

Dinner, recreation, music lessons, until 5 o'clock P. M.

Supper at 6 P. M. Evening worship at 7. Young children retire to rest; older pupils listen to reading for an hour.

Saturday is spent in writing letters for the blind, and in bead work, crocheting, etc.

Sunday, pupils attend Sabbath school and church in the morning. Bible class in the afternoon by the superintendent.

STUDIES.

Reading, Spelling, and Writing.
Mental and Written Arithmetic.
Physical and Descriptive Geography.
Coming's Physiology.
Quackenbos' Rhetoric.
" Grammar.
Willard's United States History.
Riccord's History of Rome.
Davies' Algebra.
" Bourdon.
" Geometry.

Rules and Regulations.

1st. Bell rings at 6 o'clock. Pupils must be prompt at the table, and are marked for tardiness.

*

2d. Pupils are allowed three minutes to get to their places when bell rings for recitation.

3d. The pupils will not leave the ground without permission except on Saturday.

4th. Visitors must not be invited into the Institution, nor must lodgings be given to the friends and relatives.

5th. Rudeness of every kind forbidden about the house and grounds.

6th. Pupils must not go to the kitchen or talk to the servants without permission.

7th. No pupils must enter the music-room, except the one practising.

8th. Smoking and chewing tobacco forbidden.

9th. Profanity is looked upon as a high misdemeanor.

The erroneous opinion prevails that the Institution is designed as an "Asylum for the Blind." It is designated in the act creating it as "The Mississippi State Institution for the *Education* of the Blind." If intended as the former, when once filled to its capacity no new pupils could be admitted until death had created a vacancy. Thus the Bounty of the State, which was intended to reach all, through the means of *Education*, fitting them for some pursuit in life, would be limited to the few who might chance to become the first inmates of the Institution.

The relations which pupils contract with the Institution, are not intended to sever their relations with parents, relatives, and neighborhoods, and thereby forfeit their claims for a home. Their friends should retain a certain oversight and responsibility, and receive and care for the pupils during vacation. I therefore respectfully suggest to the Board the propriety of fixing some reasonable *period* within which the education of the Blind can be

perfected, making it suffieiently long to complete the course of study adopted.

It is to be hoped that every blind child capable of being instructed will, in a short time, be admitted into this Institution.

It is respectfully recommended that a *Work Department* be added to the division, already made, of Literary and Musieal Department.

Most of the teaehing has been done orally for want of sufficient books in the raised print; the tediousness and labor of which can only be known by those who have tried it.

In the Musical Department, which opens to the unfortunate Blind more avenues of pleasure and profit than any other, the advancement has been very great, under the instruction of Miss Helen Merrill.

Knowledge in this department is not only a source of exquisite pleasure, but becomes a means of absolute support in after life. Probably more blind persons are now making an honest living from thorough and aeeurate instruetion in music than from any other source. As it is a universal language spoken by every nation, it stands the friend of the blind, wherever their fortunes may be cast.

I would therefore respectfully ask that special attention be given to the enlargement and improvement of this department, by inereasing the number and variety of instruments, and that a Band be formed from those pupils of both sexes who manifest a good eapaeity in this department.

Dr. Howe, of Boston, advises that a Brass Band be formed in a Blind Institution in preference to one of

stringed instruments. The pupils learn in half of the time.

Gymnastics and Calisthenics are being taught in many of our Blind Schools.

Reports from Kentucky, Arkansas, Illinois, and other States, speak of the deep interest taken in these healthy exercises for the Blind.

The following extract from the Report of the Arkansas Institution for the Blind, will show the importance of introducing the system into *our* School.

"We have introduced the practice of Gymnastics, feeling that as a healthy exercise and system of physical training, its importance in a school for the blind can hardly be overrated. It has all the advantages claimed for dancing, without the objectional feature of that amusement, and all reasons, which are causing its introduction into the best schools for the seeing, apply with greater force to the blind."

In addition to the duties of Superintendent and Matron of this Establishment and Principal Teacher, I have also had devolved upon me the duties of Steward, and have made all its purchases for subsistence and clothing for the pupils, and have the honor to report that the following amounts have been received and disbursed for the scholastic year ending July 1, 1869.

Amount of annual appropriation by law for the support of the Institution, $8000.00.

To which must be added the sum of two thousand dollars, a back warrant, $2000.00.

These amounts were issued in auditor's warrants, which have been discounted. All the vouchers for disbursement made for and in account of the Institution are on file in

the Bank of Messrs. J. & T. Green, subject to the inspection of the Board, and show that of the amounts on hand there remains the sum of four thousand dollars.

April Warrant,	$2000.
July "	2000.

Which have not been issued by the Auditor.

All which is respectfully submitted.

SARAH B. MERRILL,
Superintendent.

Expenses of Mississippi Institution for the Blind, from October 1st, 1868.

1868.			
Oct.	1.	Washerwoman	2 02
	2.	September expense account	154 07
	5.	Coal and gas	37 02
	9.	Lemly & Son	25 84
	9.	A. H. Kirkland	28 02
	9.	J. K. Mathews & Co., St. Louis	134 69
	17.	Freight on same	10 67
	20.	E. Murrell	16 02
Nov.	2.	October expense bill	187 49
	4.	A. H. Kirkland	8 02
	4.	Discount on State warrant	500 00
	7.	Lemly & Son	25 78
	9.	Wood	60 02
	9.	Robinson, Stevens & Co.	139 78
	10.	Dinah's wages	10 02
	17.	A. Virden	32 61
	17.	Penitentiary	15 72
	23.	Wood	12 02
	28.	November expense account	146 35
	30.	Wood	6 77
Dec.	1.	S. G. Newcomer & Co.	24 52
	3.	Lemly & Son	87 85

Dec. 5.	Wood	50 02
7.	Salary account	300 00
9.	Gas and coal	45 82
10.	Barrett, 10 cords wood	50 02
10.	S. C. Newcomer	19 49
14.	Beef	14 92
29.	A. Virden	71 35
30.	December expense account	193 38
1869.		
Jan. 19.	Lemly & Son	78 29
19.	Discount on warrant	600 00
26.	Piano rent	60 02
26.	Account salary, per omitted salaries	50 02
26.	Salary bill	450 02
26.	Ash & Lemly	14 37
27.	Buck & Boley	4 37
27.	A. Virden	78 15
30.	January expense account	159 47
Feb. 2.	George Muh	12 12
2.	W. W. Wishart	15 52
4.	Lemly & Son	71 22
12.	Coal and gas	51 52
25.	George Muh	14 77
26.	E. Murial	16 02
26.	February expense account	142 77
Mch. 2.	Dr. J. L. Carter	24 02
5.	Express charges	75
11.	Buck's wages	7 02
15.	Wood	7 02
16.	Gardening	8 02
22.	A. H. Kirkland	11 50
22.	A. Virden	123 74
23.	Gardening	7 00
Apr. 1.	Wood	4 02
1.	Washing and ironing	15 02
2.	Cook's wages	10 02

Apr. 2.	Discount on warrant.	400 02
3.	Wood	3 02
3.	Lemly & Son	134 48
3.	March expense account	126 52
3.	Robinson, Stevens & Co.	388 92
6.	A. Virden	73 03
8.	Coal and gas	33 37
10.	Buck's wages	6 02
10.	Wood	6 02
15.	Insurance (stamp on policy) . . .	50
17.	Gus. Asher	21 72
23.	Chrisman window glass	17 62
23.	Moody Wood	6 02
24.	Books	66 15
24.	Wages	12 02
30.	April expense account	125 42
30.	A. Virden	78 73
May 1.	Wood	3 02
3.	Lemly & Son	116 50
4.	S. G. Newcomer & Co.	6 02
6.	Dinah's wages	10 02
7.	Tom's wages	10 02
11.	W. B. Taylor	11 17
13.	Penitentiary	9 02
14.	A. H. Kirkland	49 77
15.	Wood	10 02
18.	April bread bill	6 97
27.	Wood	25 02
June 1.	Washing	15 02
3.	Express charges on books	8 02
7.	McLaughlin, bread	9 95
	Total	$6245 22

7. Unpaid bills due as follows :—

Spengler to Zehnder	3 65
June expense account	93 90
Lemly & Son	223 01
A. Virden	32 49
M'Laughlin, bread	20 35
Gus. Asher	9 30
J. C. Newcomer	7 35
Ash & Lemly	12 35
Eyrich & Co.	10 25
Dr. J. L. Carter	40 00
A. Virden	26 24
W. B. Taylor's bill held by Mrs. Merrill	2 15
Robinson, Stevens & Co.	85 74
J. D. Pace	7 45
Servant hire	5 00
H. B. Evans	3 25
Total	$582 48